

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY FREETOWN
INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

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NESCO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: UNESCO, PFOR

SUBJECT: UNESCO: ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION WITH LIBERIAN
OFFICIALS

REF: MONROVIA 4926

1. DEPT. WELCOMES MONROVIA'S INITIATIVE IN PROPOSING
DISCUSSIONS WITH GOL ON UNESCO WELL IN ADVANCE OF CRITICAL
PERIODS. ALTHOUGH NEXT SESSION OF UNESCO GENERAL CONFER-
ENCE IS NOT SCHEDULED TO CONVENE UNTIL OCTOBER 1978, AND
DETAILED AGENDA NOT YET AVAILABLE, WE ALREADY KNOW THAT
CERTAIN ITEMS OF GREAT INTEREST TO THE U. S. WILL BE ON
THAT AGENDA.

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2. FOR IMMEDIATE PRESENT, OUR FOCUS IS ON UNESCO EXECUTIVE
BOARD, 103RD SESSION OF WHICH WILL MEET IN PARIS
SEPTEMBER 12-OCTOBER 7, 1977. LIBERIA IS NOT A MEMBER OF
EXECUTIVE BOARD AT THIS TIME; HOWEVER, DR. ARTHUR T.
PORTER, VICE CHANCELLOR, UNIVERSITY OF SIERRA LEONE,
FREETOWN, WAS ELECTED IN DECEMBER 1976, FOR A FOUR-YEAR
TERM. IN AN INFORMAL SENSE, HE MAY BE CONSIDERED TO
REPRESENT LIBERIA'S INTERESTS. ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT KNOW TO
WHAT EXTENT THERE IS ONGOING CONSULTATION BETWEEN LIBERIA
AND SIERRA LEONE ON UNESCO MATTERS, WE DO KNOW THAT PORTER

HAS STRONG CONNECTIONS IN LIBERIA AND WE PRESUME HE IS ACCESSIBLE TO LIBERIANS ON THIS BASIS.

3. UNESCO ISSUES OF CONCERN TO U. S. THAT MONROVIA MAY WISH TO DISCUSS WITH ADVERTUS HOFF, AND ON WHICH WE WOULD WELCOME LIBERIAN SUPPORT INCLUDE FOLLOWING:

A. HUMAN RIGHTS

(1) WE ARE AWARE THAT, IN PAST, UNESCO HAS HAD LITTLE INFLUENCE IN THIS AREA, AND THAT ITS OCCASIONAL TWINGES OF CONSCIENCE HAVE RESULTED IN LITTLE OTHER THAN ONE MORE RESOLUTION CALLING ON EVERYONE TO DO BETTER IN THE FUTURE. ACTIONS TAKEN AT 1976 GENERAL CONFERENCE IN NAIROBI, HOWEVER, CONVINCED US THAT THE MOOD OF THE MEMBER STATES AND THE DIRECTOR GENERAL IS SINCERE AND AGGRESSIVE THIS TIME. WE THINK THE ORGANIZATION REALLY MEANS TO INCREASE SUBSTANTIALLY ITS EFFECTIVENESS IN BRINGING ABOUT RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN ITS FIELDS OF COMPETENCE.

(2) U. S. ADMINISTRATION'S INTEREST IN HELPING UNESCO IMPROVE ITS HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY IS SINCERE AND VIGILANT OFFICIAL USE

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OROUS. WE ARE GOING TO INVOLVE OUTSTANDING AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS EXPERTS IN OUR ACTIVITY, AND WE ARE GOING TO GIVE HUMAN RIGHTS A HIGH PRIORITY IN OUR UNESCO POLICY. WE BELIEVE THAT U. S. FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THIS AREA ARE LARGELY COMPATIBLE WITH THOSE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL.

(3) A WORKING GROUP, OF WHICH THE U. S. IS A MEMBER, WILL MEET AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS AUGUST 1-5 TO MAKE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING UNESCO'S HUMAN RIGHTS MACHINERY, WHICH PROPOSALS WILL BE REVIEWED AT THE 103RD SESSION OF THE UNESCO EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING IN PARIS, SEPTEMBER 12-OCTOBER 7, 1977. WE WILL INFORM MONROVIA OF THE OUTCOME OF THE WORKING GROUP'S EFFORTS SO THAT IT MAY DESCRIBE THEM TO GOL.

B. MASS MEDIA

(1) THERE IS A SOVIET-INSPIRED MOVE TO GET UNESCO TO ADOPT A DECLARATION ON THE MASS MEDIA THAT WOULD DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY SUPPORT THE CONCEPT OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF THE MEDIA. A "DECLARATION," IN UNESCO NOMENCLATURE, IS A STATEMENT OF UNIVERSALLY ACCEPTED PRINCIPLES, AND IT DOES NOT HAVE THE BINDING EFFECT THAT A CONVENTION IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE. NEVERTHELESS, WE REGARD IT AS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE THAT UNESCO SHOULD GO ON RECORD SUPPORTING THE PRINCIPLE OF THE CONTROLLED PRESS.

(2) ALTHOUGH PRIOR TO NAIROBI GENERAL CONFERENCE, THERE SEEMED TO BE WIDESPREAD LDC SUPPORT FOR THE SOVIET-INSPIRED DRAFT DECLARATION THAT WAS PRESENTED THERE, EVENTS PROVED THAT LDC CONCERNS REALLY FOCUSED ON PRESENT IMBALANCE IN FLOW OF NEWS, WITH OVERWHELMING BULK OF FLOW BEING FROM DEVELOPED TO DEVELOPING WORLD. THERE IS SOME LDC SUPPORT FOR CONCEPT OF MOVING TO BALANCE THE FLOW BY RESTRICTING THE INFLOW FROM THE DEVELOPED WORLD NEWS SERVICES, BUT
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THERE IS ALSO CONSIDERABLE, AND WE THINK GREATER, SUPPORT FOR CONCEPT OF REDUCING THE IMBALANCE BY BUILDING UP THE MEDIA INFRASTRUCTURE OF DEVELOPING WORLD. AT NAIROBI, WE WERE ABLE TO SPLIT LDCS OFF FROM SOVIETS BY PROMISING THE LDCS HELP WITH BUILDING UP THEIR OWN INFRASTRUCTURE. THE SOVIET DRAFT WAS NOT CONSIDERED IN NAIROBI, AND THE SECRETARIAT IS PREPARING A NEW DRAFT DECLARATION TO SUBMIT TO THE 1978 GENERAL CONFERENCE.

(3) U. S. MEDIA, PARTICULARLY PRINT MEDIA, ARE HIGHLY SENSITIZED TO UNESCO ACTIONS IN THIS AREA, AND RIGHTLY OR WRONGLY, THEY SUSPECT THAT UNESCO SECRETARIAT IS ON THE SIDE OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL. THE SECRETARIAT, ON THE OTHER HAND, STATES THAT IT HAS NO MEDIA POLICY, BUT TRIES MERELY TO REFLECT THE VARYING VIEWS OF THE MEMBER STATES. U. S. MEDIA CONCERN WITH UNESCO ACTIVITIES CONTINUES TO BE INTENSE, AND THE WRONG OUTCOME IN UNESCO COULD SUBJECT OUR RELATIONS WITH THE ORGANIZATION TO A STRAIN THAT WOULD BE SERIOUS, IF NOT FATAL.

(4) U. S. IS MOVING AHEAD TO MAKE GOOD ON ITS COMMITMENT TO ASSIST LDCS TO BUILD UP THEIR INFRASTRUCTURE. A PRIVATE MEDIA GROUP KNOWN AS THE WORLD PRESS FREEDOM COMMITTEE, HEADED BY GEORGE BEEBE OF THE MIAMI HERALD, HAD ALREADY RAISED \$125,000 TOWARD A TARGET OF \$1 MILLION FOR LDC PROGRAMS, AND BEEBE, HIMSELF, IS CONDUCTING COURSES FOR THIRD WORLD JOURNALISTS.

(5) THE U. S. WILL OPPOSE THE ADOPTION BY UNESCO OF ANY DECLARATION ON THE MEDIA THAT CALLS FOR GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER THE MEDIA, WHICH WE VIEW AS A SEPARATE ISSUE THAT IS IN NO WAY RELATED TO ACHIEVING A MORE RATIONAL FLOW OF INFORMATION BETWEEN THE DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING WORLD.
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C. BETTER MANAGEMENT OF DIVISIVE POLITICAL ISSUES.

(1) ATTENTION PAID TO DIVISIVE POLITICAL ISSUES IN UNESCO DETRACTS FROM THE ATTENTION PAID TO THE ORGANIZATION'S TECHNICAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE FIELDS OF ITS COMPETENCE. GREAT PROGRESS WAS MADE IN NAIROBI IN REDUCING THE AMOUNT OF TIME SPENT ON POLITICAL ISSUES THROUGH THE USE OF THE DRAFTING AND NEGOTIATION GROUP, PROPOSED BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL. DNG WAS MADE UP OF A RESTRICTED GROUP OF SENIOR DELEGATION MEMBERS, REPRESENTING ALL GEOGRAPHIC AREAS, THAT MET IN PRIVATE TO DEAL WITH THE EXPLOSIVE POLITICAL ISSUES, COMING TO A CONSENSUS ON HOW BEST TO HANDLE THE ISSUES. THE DNG WORKED VERY WELL, AND THE U. S. WILL SUPPORT A CONTINUATION OF IT.

(2) PARALLELING AN INSTITUTIONALIZED DNG, WE WILL PROPOSE THE STUDY AND EVENTUAL ADOPTION OF DUE PROCESS MACHINERY FOR EXAMINING THE COMPLAINTS LODGED BY ONE UNESCO MEMBER STATE AGAINST ANOTHER. AT PRESENT, SUCH COMPLAINTS, NORMALLY TAKING THE FORM OF CONDEMNATORY RESOLUTIONS, GO DIRECTLY INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OR THE EXECUTIVE BOARD. WE HOPE TO PERSUADE THE MEMBERS THAT SUCH ALLEGATIONS SHOULD FIRST BE EXAMINED BY RECOGNIZED INDEPENDENT EXPERTS, WORKING OUTSIDE THE FRAMEWORK OF THE POLITICAL BODIES OF UNESCO IN AN IMPARTIAL ATMOSPHERE. THE FINDINGS OF SUCH INDEPENDENT EXPERTS WOULD BE PUT BEFORE THE POLITICAL BODIES AS THE BASIS FOR THEIR DETERMINATION OF THE ACTION TO BE TAKEN. IN THOSE CASES WHERE ALLEGATIONS ARE SUBSTANTIATED, WE WOULD PROPOSE THAT PUBLICITY BE GIVEN.

(3) WE WILL CALL ON THE SEPTEMBER EXECUTIVE BOARD TO SUPPORT A STUDY OF SUCH DUE PROCESS MACHINERY TO BE PUT BEFORE THE APRIL-MAY 1978 SESSION OF THE BOARD, AND WE
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WOULD HOPE FOR THE SUPPORT OF ALL MEMBERS WHO ARE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN HAVING UNESCO FOCUS ON ITS PROGRAM RESPONSIBILITIES.

D. DRAFT DECLARATION ON RACE AND RACIAL PREJUDICE.

(1) UNESCO WILL HAVE AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING ON THE DRAFT DECLARATION LATER THIS YEAR (DATE AND PLACE NOT YET FIXED) IN WHICH ALL MEMBER STATES OF UNESCO, INCLUDING LIBERIA, WILL HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE. U. S. PARTICIPATION IS SUBJECT TO UNCERTAINTY OVER WHETHER OR NOT THE UNESCO MEETING FALLS UNDER THE EXISTING PROHIBITION ON OUR PARTICIPATION IN THE UN DECADE ON RACISM. WE ARE CURRENTLY STUDYING THE QUESTION OF A RE-EXAMINATION OF OUR POLICY OF NON-PARTICIPATION.

(2) UNESCO'S WORK ON RACE AND RACIAL PREJUDICE OVER THE PAST YEARS HAS BEEN, ON THE WHOLE, SOUND, AND WE DO NOT TAKE ISSUE WITH THE PREVIOUS PAPERS AND STATEMENTS THE ORGANIZATION HAS PRODUCED. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT SOME MEMBER STATES MAY ATTEMPT TO INTRODUCE INTO THE DRAFT DECLARATION A REFERENCE TO UNGA RESOLUTION 3379, WHICH EQUATED ZIONISM WITH RACISM. THE UNITED STATES CANNOT SUPPORT ANY DECLARATION THAT INCLUDES SUCH A REFERENCE.

4. IT WOULD BE OF GREAT HELP IF MONROVIA COULD DISCUSS ABOVE FOUR ISSUES WITH HOFF. THERE ARE OTHER ISSUES IN UNESCO THAT COMMAND OUR ATTENTION, BUT THESE FOUR ARE THE MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON OUR RELATIONS WITH THE ORGANIZATION.

5. ON THE MATTER OF U. S. PAYMENTS TO UNESCO, YOU MAY TELL
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HOFF THAT THE U. S. IS CURRENTLY PAID UP TO DECEMBER 31, 1976, THANKS TO A \$3.5 MILLION PAYMENT WE MADE LAST OCTOBER AND A \$43.1 MILLION PAYMENT WE MADE IN JUNE. FY 1978 LEGISLATION NOW IN FINAL STAGES OF APPROVAL CONTAINS \$17 MILLION WHICH WILL APPLY ON OUR CY 1977 UNESCO ASSESSMENT OF \$27 MILLION.

FOR FREETOWN: U. S. OFFICIALS DEALING WITH UNESCO HAVE ESTABLISHED GOOD WORKING RELATIONS WITH DR. PORTER, AND FIND HIM WELL DISPOSED TOWARD WORKING WITH U. S. IF EMBASSY BELIEVES IT COULD DO SO WITHOUT EMBARRASSING PORTER, WE WOULD WELCOME ACTION ON YOUR PART TO DEEPEN THE CONTACT. VANCE

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